

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

105th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 70

April 2, 1998, 5:48 pm
Page S-3076 Temp. Record

BUDGET RESOLUTION/NIH Increase, Across-the-Board Cut

SUBJECT: Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 1999-2003 . . . S.Con. Res. 86. Domenici motion to table the Specter modified amendment No. 2254.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 57-41

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S.Con. Res. 86, the Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 1999-2003, will balance the unified budget in 1998 and will run surpluses for each of the next 5 fiscal years. Both Federal spending and Federal revenues will increase 3.5 percent from fiscal year (FY) 1998 to FY 1999. All surpluses will be reserved for Social Security reform. A reserve fund will be established to allow the entire Federal share of revenues resulting from a potential tobacco settlement to be dedicated to bolstering Medicare's solvency.

The Specter modified amendment would adjust function allocations with the intention of increasing funding for the National Institutes of Health by \$2 billion and paying for that increase by cutting all defense and non-defense discretionary spending across-the-board by .4 percent.

Debate on a first-degree amendment to a budget resolution is limited to 2 hours. Debate was further limited by unanimous consent. After debate, Senator Domenici moved to table the Specter amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

We share our colleagues' commitment to increasing funding for the NIH, and we note that this resolution already plans for substantial increases in funding. For FY 1999, it plans on a \$1.5 billion budget authority increase, and over 5 years it plans on a \$15.5 billion increase. Last year's appropriation for the NIH was \$13.6 billion, which was nearly a billion dollars more than the previous year's appropriation. Virtually every other discretionary spending program in the budget is being held at or near a hard

(See other side)

YEAS (57)			NAYS (41)			NOT VOTING (2)	
Republicans (45 or 83%)		Democrats (12 or 27%)	Republicans (9 or 17%)	Democrats (32 or 73%)		Republicans (1)	Democrats (1)
Abraham	Hutchison	Bingaman	Collins	Akaka	Kerry	Helms- ^{2AY}	Inouye- ²
Allard	Inhofe	Breaux	D'Amato	Baucus	Kohl		
Ashcroft	Kempthorne	Byrd	DeWine	Biden	Lautenberg		
Bennett	Kyl	Cleland	Frist	Boxer	Leahy		
Bond	Lott	Conrad	Grassley	Bryan	Levin		
Brownback	Lugar	Dodd	Jeffords	Bumpers	Lieberman		
Burns	Mack	Feinstein	Santorum	Daschle	Mikulski		
Campbell	McCain	Graham	Snowe	Dorgan	Moseley-Braun		
Chafee	McConnell	Kerrey	Specter	Durbin	Murray		
Coats	Murkowski	Landrieu		Feingold	Reed		
Cochran	Nickles	Moynihan		Ford	Reid		
Coverdell	Roberts	Torricelli		Glenn	Robb		
Craig	Roth			Harkin	Rockefeller		
Domenici	Sessions			Hollings	Sarbanes		
Enzi	Shelby			Johnson	Wellstone		
Faircloth	Smith, Bob			Kennedy	Wyden		
Gorton	Smith, Gordon						
Gramm	Stevens						
Grams	Thomas						
Gregg	Thompson						
Hagel	Thurmond						
Hatch	Warner						
Hutchinson							

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

freeze, but we are well on our way to doubling NIH funding. With that fact in mind, we must oppose this amendment. Making an across-the-board cut to add another \$2 billion would result in cuts in a lot of programs that are already being held constant. For instance, veterans programs would get cut \$76 million, environmental spending would get cut \$89 million, and transportation spending would get cut \$160 million. We commend our colleagues' for being responsible and suggesting offsets instead of taking the money out of the surpluses or hypothetical tobacco taxes, but we still cannot support this amendment. We have added substantial sums already to the NIH budget; we simply cannot afford to add any more.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

We sincerely appreciate the effort in this budget resolution to provide additional funding for the NIH, but we suggest that some of the numbers are not realistic. The function out of which the NIH is funded has many other areas that are of high funding priority, including education. This resolution assumes a large increase in funding for education as well. We just do not believe that there is enough room in this function category to provide the types of funding increases that are assumed. When we look at the amounts allocated, we do not believe that the NIH will get more than an additional \$350 million in outlays next year. That amount just is not sufficient to double NIH funding over the next 5 years. Therefore, we have offered the Specter amendment to add an extra \$2 billion in funding for the NIH. We did not propose taking any money from tobacco taxes, because we believe the enactment of a tobacco settlement is too speculative to rely upon, and we did not suggest using any of the surpluses because those should be reserved for Social Security. Instead, we have suggested an across-the-board cut in discretionary spending. Obviously, such a cut will entail some difficulties, but the Senate is on record as supporting doubling the NIH's funding and the Specter amendment would make that goal achievable. Certainly the NIH should have its funding doubled. Medical advances, especially in genetics, are being made with astonishing speed. We are on the brink of conquering cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, heart disease, and a long list of other deadly maladies. Cures could be found even more quickly if more research were funded. At present, the NIH can only fund 28 percent of research that it believes has merit. We urge our colleagues to support the Specter amendment, and to thereby live up to their commitment to double NIH funding,